



## How Does Popcorn POP?

### A Native American Legend

Inside each kernel of popcorn there lives a little spirit. These spirits are quiet and happy to live on their own, but they don't like to be disturbed. They get angry when their houses are heated. When they get angry, they start to shake. Finally, when the heat is just too much to take, they get so angry that they burst out of their homes and into the air as an angry puff of steam.



*Somebody's house exploded!*

### The Real Story

Each kernel of popcorn contains a drop of water. The water is inside a circle of soft starch. The starch is surrounded by the kernel's hard outer surface. When the kernel gets hot, the water expands. The pressure builds up against the starch, and eventually the hard surface gives way. The starch inflates and bursts, turning the kernel inside out. Then the steam inside the popcorn is released.



## You can write your own popcorn legend.

Make up a story about how and why popcorn pops, and write it in the space below. Draw pictures to illustrate your story.